

FIGURINE LAMP WITH ILLUMINATING DRESS

DESCRIPTION

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[Para 1] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/498,897 filed August 29, 2003; where this provisional application is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[Para 2] The present invention relates to lamps and, more specifically, to decorative figurine lamps.

DESCRIPTION OF THE RELATED ART

[Para 3] There are numerous lamps and lampshades on the market. Some are designed to emit a direct, bright light, others a soft light and, yet, others an artistically pleasing light. Further, in addition to the light they emit, most lamps are also designed to have an interesting and/or artistically pleasing exterior design. Despite the various types of lamps available in today's marketplace, consumers continuously demand new and unique designs for emitting light.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[Para 4] The present invention provides an apparatus and method to structurally support and selectively illuminate a new and unique lamp for emitting light.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[Para 5] Figure 1 is a front view of a scanned photograph of an actual figurine lamp with illuminating dress according to one embodiment of the present invention, depicting a princess look and an optional backdrop member with a heart design.

[Para 6] Figure 2 is a front view of a scanned photograph of an actual figurine lamp with illuminating dress according to one embodiment of the present invention, depicting a bridal look and an optional backdrop member with a covered diamond-like shape.

[Para 7] Figure 3 is a side isometric view of the scanned photograph of Figure 2.

[Para 8] Figure 4 is a front view of a scanned photograph of an actual figurine lamp with illuminating dress according to one embodiment of the present invention, depicting an African queen look and an optional backdrop member with an open arch.

[Para 9] Figure 5 is a close up view of the upper bodice portion of the figurine lamp of Figure 4, depicting embroidered designs on an otherwise sheer fabric.

[Para 10] Figure 6 is a side view of a figurine lamp according to one embodiment of the present invention, with the lower skirt portion not present.

[Para 11] Figure 7 is a front perspective view of the figurine lamp of Figure 6 with the lower skirt portion, the figurine, and the upper bodice portion not present.

[Para 12] Figure 8 is a front view of the figurine lamp of Figure 6, depicting an optional backdrop member with a heart design.

[Para 13] Figure 9 is a front view of a figurine lamp according to one embodiment of the present invention, depicting an optional backdrop member with an open arch design.

[Para 14] Figure 10 is a front view of a figurine lamp according to one embodiment of the present invention, with the optional backdrop member and hooks eliminated.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[Para 15] The present detailed description is directed toward embodiments of a figurine lamp 10 with an illuminating dress. Scanned photographs of actual embodiments are shown in Figures 1–5. As can be seen from these photographs, the lamp 10 incorporates a figurine 11, and a dress 13 having an upper bodice portion 13a and a lower skirt portion 13b. The figurine 11 can be comprised of a torso from any doll, character or figurine. To prominently display the facial features of the figurine 11, an optional backdrop member 12 can be positioned behind the figurine of the lamp 10. As Figures 1–5 show, the backdrop member 12 can be configured to have any number of interesting design shapes, such as a heart, an open arch, or a covered diamond-like shape. As is to be understood by one of ordinary skill in the art, the specific shape of the backdrop member 12 is a design choice, and any number of shapes can be used. In addition to being aesthetically pleasing, when a backdrop member 12 is used, it provides certain advantages when the lamp 10 is in a suspended position. These advantages are described further below.

[Para 16] The lower skirt portion 13b can be comprised of fabric 14 having light reflective properties, such as crepe-backed satin, or fabrics that are more opaque in nature, such as heavy polyester or velvet. A light source 16 can be positioned behind the fabric 14 of the lower skirt portion 13b to enable the figurine lamp 10 to emit a soft light and, when the light source 16 is selectively turned on, the light source 16 can cast various patterns and shades of light through the lower skirt portion 13b of the lamp 10. The various light patterns can be caused by patterns in or on the fabric 14. For example, the close-up view provided in Figure 5 shows that embroidered designs on an otherwise sheer fabric 14 block the light while the more sheer portions of the fabric allow the light to emit through the fabric 14, producing a soothing visual interplay between shades of light and darkness.

[Para 17] Figure 6 shows a side view of the figurine lamp 10 with the lower skirt portion 13b removed to provide a better view of the frame 18. The frame 18 is a structural element that holds the figurine 11 and upper bodice portion 13a of the figurine lamp 10 and the light source 16 in place, and safely keeps the lower skirt portion 13b from contacting the light source 16. The frame 18 can be comprised of a planar portion 20 and an outwardly projecting portion 22.

[Para 18] Figure 7 shows a front perspective view of the figurine lamp 10 shown in Figure 6, with both the lower skirt portion 13b and the figurine 11 and upper bodice portion 13a removed. The planar portion 20 of the frame 18 can have a platform section 24 adapted to captively receive and retain the figurine 11, and the outwardly projecting portion 22 can have a number of curved members 26 that form a dress-shaped lampshade structure 28.

[Para 19] A light socket 30, configured to operatively receive the light source 16, can be positioned between the planar portion 20 and the outwardly projecting portion 22 of the frame 18 and can have a switch 34 for selectively turning the light source 16 on and off. The switch 34 can be activated with either a simple pull chain or any number of commercially available switching devices. The light source 16 can consist of any clear or colored light bulb. Because the light source 16, in final assembly, can be positioned close to fabric 14, a low-wattage light bulb may be used. If desired, fabric 14 can be positioned to span across a bottom portion 31 of the lamp 10 to help soften the glare that would occur if one were to look directly up into the bottom of the lower skirt portion 13b of the lamp 10.

[Para 20] If desired, one or more hooks 32 can be coupled to the frame 18 and used to mount the figurine lamp 10 onto a cross member for display. The optional backdrop member 12 can be coupled to the planar portion of the frame 18. When the frame 18 is suspended by the hooks 32, the backdrop member 12 can be used to further straighten or maintain the position of the mounted figurine lamp 10 by positioning the backdrop member 12 against a flat surface, such as a wall. A further advantage provided by the backdrop

member 12 is that it can hide the hooks 32 when the figurine lamp 10 is viewed from the front.

[Para 21] The frame 18, hooks 32 and backdrop member 12 can be made of any number, or combination, of materials, such as wire or molded plastic. In the illustrated embodiment, the frame 18 is made of wire, and the hooks 32 are made of brass. If wire is used, the frame can be dipped in plastic, silicone or other equivalent material to prepare the surface of the wire so that the fabric 14 will more easily adhere to the wire. Alternatively, craft tape, such as commercially available bias tape, twill tape, or suitable substitutes can also be used to wrap the wire and thereby prepare the surface of the wire.

[Para 22] During assembly, the fabric 14, which can consist of one or more different types of material, can be positioned over various sections of the frame 18 to form the lower skirt portion 13b of the figurine lamp 10. The fabric 14 can be pulled tight over some or all of the outwardly projecting sections 22, or positioned over the frame 18 in a free formed manner to achieve a number of different artistic looks. Once a desired look is achieved, the fabric 14 can be secured in place with glue, thread, or other equivalent means.

[Para 23] The upper bodice portion 13a of the figurine lamp 10 can also be secured in place in a number of ways. For example, in one embodiment, the platform section 24 of the frame 18 has a threaded opening and the upper bodice portion 13a is screwed into the opening. In another embodiment, the upper bodice portion 13a is form-fitted into an opening and glued or fastened in place. In yet another embodiment, the platform section 24 has a flat surface and the upper bodice portion 13a is glued to a top surface of the platform 24.

[Para 24] As shown in Figures 1–5, the manner in which a designer decorates the upper bodice portion 13a, the lower skirt portion 13b and the back drop member 12 greatly changes the look of the final product. For example, Figure 1 depicts a princess look, Figure 2 a bridal look, and Figure 5 an African queen look. As shown from these examples, the figurine lamp 10 can be decorated with beads, faux fur, feathers, pearls and a number of other accent items, such as earrings, gloves, veils, hats, etc.

[Para 25] In another embodiment, Figure 10 shows a figurine lamp 110 similar to those shown and described in connection with Figures 1–9; however, the optional backdrop member 12 and hooks 32 have been eliminated. In this illustrated, alternative embodiment, the reference numerals have been incremented by a value of one hundred for components or features that are identical or substantially similar to the same components or features discussed above. Only significant differences in the operation and structure are described. This figure shows that embodiments of the figurine lamp 110 of the present invention can also be used and displayed on a flat surface. Because displaying the lamp 110 on a flat surface allows it to be viewed from 360°, if desired, the plurality of curved members 126 forming the outwardly projecting portion of the frame 118 can be spaced to span about the lamp 110 in a full circle, and the lamp 110 can be decorated with fabric 114 on all sides. While more material may be required to produce a full circle design, this offers yet another aesthetically pleasing design option.

[Para 26] All of the above U.S. patents, U.S. patent application publications, U.S. patent applications, foreign patents, foreign patent applications and non-patent publications referred to in this specification and/or listed in the Application Data Sheet, are incorporated herein by reference, in their entirety.

[Para 27] From the foregoing it will be appreciated that, although specific embodiments of the invention have been described herein for purposes of illustration, various modifications may be made without deviating from the spirit and scope of the invention.